



# How to research an islamic topic online



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful





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Assalamu'alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu,

We pray that this message reaches you  
in good health and imaan.

On behalf of our AMAU Academy team, we would like  
to present to you these compiled notes that we have  
prepared to make your journey with us a lot easier.

Our notes are compiled by the AMAU Admin team  
and have not been comprehensively checked  
by a teacher.

If you find any errors or corrections that need  
to be made, kindly inform us via our email  
**[helpdesk@amauacademy.com](mailto:helpdesk@amauacademy.com)**

May Allah make our paths toward seeking  
beneficial knowledge easy and kindle our hearts  
with sincerity and gratefulness  
towards Him.

Jazakumullahu Khayran



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# General Guidelines

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*Chapter One*



Conducting online research is a good starting point to find out about the different websites that are available and other people's opinions and resources before going through the books. Hence why learning how to conduct research online is an important skill to have, given the available resources. Below are some essential tips to keep in mind when researching online.

**Side benefit:** always double-check your references, especially since it is easy to copy and paste articles nowadays.

- **Don't believe everything you read**

It's easy to get access to huge amounts of information online that can be written by non-Muslims, written by deviant groups, inaccurate or incorrect.

- **Have an Arabic keyboard**

- **Have an ad blocker**

This is essential because some websites e.g. Arabic dictionaries, usually have inappropriate ads running on the site.

- **Have a software to gather your research**

Make sure that the software you use can manage English and Arabic. You should also consider having some sort of cloud backup in case you lose your device.

- **Have a pdf managing software**

This should enable you to comment and annotate on pdfs of books which is very beneficial when conducting research.

- **Utilize Google OCR**

This should help you convert screenshots of Arabic pdfs to actual text that you can copy and paste.

- **Google's search engine tools**

'site:' followed by the website's name and a keyword will bring back results from that site e.g. 'site:sunnah.com intention'.

'+' followed by a keyword indicates that the search must include it and '-' followed by a keyword indicates that the search must not include it e.g. 'hadeeth +intention -hijrah'.

"" using double quotes indicates that the sentence must be like that e.g. 'hadeeth "actions are according to"'.

'ext:pdf' followed by a keyword will only show you pdfs with that keyword e.g. 'ext:pdf intention'.

':' beside search results can help you access the cached version of websites that are no longer available (specialised sites are also available for this).

# Researching the Qur'an

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*Chapter Two*

To be able to research the Qur'an online effectively, you need to be able to use Arabic even if your Arabic is bad. Even then, most Qur'an websites suffer from having a search engine that searches for too much and ends up bringing up the things you were not looking for. A good alternative is the Qur'an.com app, as the search engine and the copying feature there are much better.

As for Qur'an translations, the only two you should be looking at are Sahih International and Muhsin Khan. Muhsin Khan's translation is more accurate, and it was designed to be a Tafseer more than a translation, while Sahih International is more readable. Nevertheless, both are not perfect and have some flaws as they are human efforts. Moreover, one of the best resources for Tafsir in Arabic is 'Qur'an.ksu.edu.saw' as it provides multiple books of Tafsir under each other for each Ayah. For someone who does not understand Arabic, you can use Google Translate or other translating software to translate the results and even though the translation won't be perfect, it should give you an idea of what is being said.



# Researching Hadith

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*Chapter Three*

When researching Hadith, Google's search engine is good, especially if you use the 'site:' tool because Hadith is not restricted to a single book. 'Sunnah.com' is a good site, but its search feature can be a hit or miss at times. Moreover, when looking at 'Sunnah.com' one should keep in mind that some parts might be incomplete or missing in English. Another thing to keep in mind when researching Hadith online is that the reference numbering might mismatch. One way around this is to copy a phrase from the Hadith and then search for the references that match it.

Side note: when it comes to the rulings that 'Sunnah.com' provides, it refers to the ruling of a specific Hadith in a specific book. That's why it might mention that a Hadith is 'Da'if', but that Hadith is mentioned in Al-Bukhari.

A very good Hadith website in Arabic is 'dorar.net', which has a complete Hadith encyclopedia on it. Even though it does not give you the chain of narration, it does provide you with the references, a ruling on the Hadith, and who the ruling is from.

Generally speaking, translations of the Qur'an are much better than Hadith. The issue with Hadith translations arises from the fact that people who don't know anything about Hadith are the ones translating it. This has led to huge mistakes in translation that are yet to be corrected.

# Researching Books

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*Chapter Four*

When searching for English books, one of the best approaches is to use the ‘ext:pdf’ tool e.g. ‘patience and gratitude ext:pdf’. This will cause the search results to consist of pdfs of the book that you searched for, in this case, ‘patience and gratitude’.

As for Arabic, when looking for actual digital copies of books, the most famous resource is ‘shamela.ws’, which has a huge collection of books. The search tool that the website has is good as it enables you to search for the titles of books, phrases within books, and particular page/reference numbers.

As for Arabic pdf copies of books, ‘waqfeya.net’ and ‘noor-book.com’ are good websites for that, even though ‘noor-book.com’ has a terrible ad policy where you have to whitelist the website from your ad blocker to get access to it.

# Researching Arabic Words

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*Chapter Five*



One of the best websites when it comes to searching for the meaning of Arabic words is 'almaany.com'; however, this website should be accessed while using an ad blocker due to the ads that it has. This website does have an English section, but the better approach would be to search for the word in Arabic and then change the interface to English. Keep in mind that this website has a horrendous auto-correct feature, so make sure that the word you type in is the word that you are looking for. After finding your word and looking at the definition, you can scroll down to the bottom and choose 'English' and it will provide you with the English counterpart.

Even though it is better to go through a proper Arabic dictionary, it usually takes a long time if you have many words to go through. As for online dictionaries, you have the ability to go through many words within minutes.

Another useful website is 'ejtaal.net/aa', which collects dictionaries together. This website allows you to search through dictionaries, but you have to search using root letters. You can also search for words using the English alphabet, but you have to go through their 'About' section to know how that works.

Finally, the best Arabic-English dictionary is Lane's Lexicon which is a translation of Classical Arabic dictionaries. This is also available on 'ejtaal.net/aa' and is a great resource that you can benefit immensely from.

# Researching Fatawa

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*Chapter Six*

Researching Fatawa is a bit difficult due to the lack of dedicated Fatawa websites and due to the fact that reading a Fatwa and applying it to someone are two different issues. Nevertheless, there are two approaches to researching Fatawa online.

The first is going to a specific website such as ‘islamqa.info’, which has information in both Arabic and English, but you will get more results if you search in Arabic. Another similar website is ‘islamweb.net’, but it is blocked in some countries. The other option is to search Google in general. One thing to keep in mind is that when you research Fatawa from websites, you need to look at their sources i.e. where they got the Fatwa from. This is where your role as a researcher comes into play, as you need to dig to find the primary resources. It is important to point out here that these websites will gather for you what's good and what's not. However, the benefit of being able to conduct fast and comprehensive research is undeniable.

Another place you can find Fatawa is the website of your local Islamic authorities. This is usually found at a country level. Moreover, there are Fatawa websites for specific scholars, such as ‘binbaz.org.sa’ and ‘binothaimeen.net’.

# Other Beneficial Websites

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*Chapter Seven*

From the most beneficial websites are the websites of scholars. An example of this is the website of Shaykh Bin Baz, 'binbaz.org.sa', in which you will find his Fatawa, explanations, etc. This website is in Arabic, but you can use a translating software to navigate through it. Some of the scholars include their books on the websites, such as Shaykh Abdul Razzaq Al-Badr in his website 'al-badr.net', and the quality of these online versions are some of the best.

There are other beneficial websites like 'saaid.net' in which there are different articles and benefits, some of which are good while others not so much, but it does provide a lot of information in one place.

As for forums, there are a couple of good ones, but the main issue with forums, in general, is that anyone can write anything. 'Ahlalhdeeth.com' and 'majles.alukah.net' are among the more beneficial forum sites. As a side benefit, you can use forums to find links to other sites, not necessarily for the information itself.

Finally, 'wikipedia.org' is very useful, especially in Arabic, for Islamic content; it is good for things like narrators and general information. Using 'wikipedia.org' is fine as long as you look at the sources provided and double-check them.





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we recommend that you take  
this self evaluation quiz based  
on the notes and video  
series that you have  
just completed.

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